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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/704,068

11/01/2000

Francis Robert Burianek

06576.105025- MS No
15051

3938

20786 7590 06/29/2004

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EXAMINER

LIN, WEN TAI

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2154

DATE MAILED: 06/29/2004

2

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/704,068

Applicant(s)

BURIANEK ET AL.

Examiner

Wen-Tai Lin

Art Unit

2154

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 November 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-18 are presented for examination.
2. Claims 1-7 and 9-15 are objected to because the following terms lack antecedent basis:

In claim 1, "the task delegation information";

In claim 4, "the project manager";

In claim 6, "the task ownership information"; and

In claim 9, "the subtask delegation information".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Retallick [U.S. Pat. No. 6006215].

5. As to claims 1 and 4, Retallick teaches the invention substantially as claimed including: a method of making a delegation of a task comprising the steps of:

- sending a signal from a first resource client to a server [i.e., an activity manager (col.1, lines 7-14) indicating that the task is being delegated to a second resource client [col.4, lines 1-15 and 51-52]; and
- sending a record of the task delegation from the server to a storage medium [col.4, lines 16-19; col.7, lines 43-51; i.e., all the activities/events are recorded in databases].

Retallick does not specifically teach that the server is separated from a project manager client and therefore it is not required to sending the task delegation information from the server to the second resource client and to a project manager client [see col.7, line 2-28; e.g., the task delegation module has the capability of analyzing a user's workload and availability for newly delegated data].

However, in a workflow environment upon which Retallick's system is based, it is well known that workers are situated in a management hierarchy wherein various levels of managers are in place for approving documents and/or delegation of rights. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further single out project manager clients in Retallick's system for monitoring the resource clients' availability and for approving or rejecting the delegation because by doing so it would make Retallick's system more directly imitating a real working environment.

Art Unit: 2783

6. As to claims 2-3, Retallick further teaches that the second resource client may accept or reject the task delegation, depending the availability of the second resource client [col.6, line 61 – col.7, line 10], wherein the steps depicted in claim 3 are obvious because a separate project manager client would then need to inform the database subsystem of its decision so as to update the task assignment status.

7. As to claim 6, Retallick further teaches that a Contact record can be modified or added to as new information requires updates to older information [col.13, lines 39-46]. As such, the detailed steps depicted in this claim are obvious in view of a separate project manager client and server.

8. As to claim 7, Retallick further teaches that approval of the task delegation by the project manager client is automatic [col.4, line 53 – col.5, line 62].

9.

10. As to claims 5 and 8, since the features of these claims can also be found in claims 1-4 and 6-7, they are rejected for the same reasons set forth in the rejection of claims 1-4 and 6-7 above.

11. As to claim 9, Retallick teaches that Topics and Subtopics are so similar, wherever Topics are mentioned herein, it is to be understood that the statement applies to Subtopics as well, unless otherwise stated [col.2, lines 29-40]. Accordingly, the steps

Art Unit: 2783

depicted in claims 1-7 are applicable to claims 9-15 [it is noted that the second resource client of claims 15 is equivalent to the project manager client of claim 1].

12. As to claims 10-18, since the features of these claims can also be found in claims 1-9, they are rejected for the same reasons set forth in the rejection of claims 1-9 above.

13. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

Cheyet et al. [U.S. Pat. No. 6691151];

SMIGA et al. [U.S. PGPub 20020019825];

Theimer et al. [U.S. Pat. No. 5649099];

Wu et al. [U.S. Pat. No. 6510451]; and

Nevarez et al. [U.S. Pat. No. 6189103].

14. A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 (three) months and 0 days from the mail date of this letter. Failure to respond within the period for response will result in ABANDONMENT of the application (see 35 U.S.C. 133, M.P.E.P. 710.02, 710.02(b)).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Wen-Tai Lin whose telephone number is (703)305-4875. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (8:00-5:00) .

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Follansbee can be reached on (703)305-8498. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are as follows:

(703)872-9306 for official communications; and

(703)746-5516 for status inquires draft communication.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)305-3900.

Wen-Tai Lin

June 3, 2004

Wen-Tai Lin
6/3/04